

AGN. NO. _____

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH AND
ZEV YAROSLAVSKY

August 26, 2003

SUBSTITUTE MOTION FOR ITEM NO. 17

Education Coordinating Council

On May 16, 2003, a group of community leaders, spearheaded by the Children's Law Center of Los Angeles, convened the first annual Education Summit to discuss the need to improve educational outcomes for abused and neglected youth under the jurisdiction of our dependency system. Recent studies have shown that foster youth have a higher risk of educational failure compared to other children of the same age. The constant disruption in these children's lives often has a detrimental effect on their academic and home life.

Although the Education Summit focused on foster youth, the County has long recognized that educational success is just as crucial for probation youth. Similar issues and barriers to appropriate education exist for all at-risk youth in Los Angeles County, whether they are in the dependency or delinquency systems.

Participants in the Education Summit recommended that a council be created to oversee and coordinate the decisions relating to the education of abused and neglected youth. In Los Angeles County, there are committees, task forces and working groups

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that address the educational needs of foster and probation youth; however, there is no centralized group that coordinates all of these efforts.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE THAT the Board of Supervisors instruct the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation, in collaboration with the Children's Law Center, to convene a workgroup that includes, but is not limited to, representatives from Los Angeles County Office of Education and other school districts, the judiciary, California Youth Connection, Commission on Children and Families, Probation Commission, Children's Planning Council, Los Angeles City Commission on Children and Families, foster caregiver groups, Public Defender, and District Attorney. The Departments shall report back to the Board in 90 days on the workgroup's recommendations regarding:

1. The feasibility of creating an Education Coordinating Council, to address the education needs of foster and probation youth, including a proposed model; and
2. The development of a new Education unit within DCFS or a joint Education unit between DCFS and Probation.